



Northeast Region the *MARS* report

February 2004

The Northeast Region's Monthly Accomplishment Report Summary

Oil Spill Pollutes 30 Miles of New Jersey Coastline

During the week of Feb. 2, special agents and wildlife inspectors assigned to the Elizabeth, N.J., office responded to an oil spill of an unknown amount of No. 6 fuel oil that impacted an estimated 30 miles of New Jersey coastline in Monmouth and Ocean counties. Some of the areas impacted are known to be piping plover, least tern and sea beach amaranth habitat.

The first report of the spill was received on Feb. 3 by New Jersey State Police. The origin and the responsible party of the spill are unknown. Office of Law

Enforcement personnel documented migratory bird mortality and recovery associated with the spill to collect evidence. More than 100 dead birds and 50 live oiled birds were collected during a five-day period. Tri-State Bird Rescue and Research was onsite for the recovery efforts and treatment of birds oiled by the spill.

Federal, state and local emergency response agencies participated in the spill, including U.S. Coast Guard, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, New Jersey

State Police, New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife, and many local municipal agencies. Cleanup efforts performed by Miller Environmental under contract were nearly complete at the time of this report.

The state has posted a \$25,000 reward for information leading to the identity of the responsible party that caused the spill. The New Jersey Division of Criminal Justice has set up a tip line at 1-866-TIPS-4CJ.

High Technology Enters Crime Investigations

During the week of Feb. 27, special agents went to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's forensics lab in Ashland, Ore. The purpose of the trip was to review information that was imaged and seized from computers pursuant to a search warrant that was served on December 10.

Special agents reviewed

information that was obtained and categorized via various searches for key words. Terms like ivory, elephant, elephant hair, EHB, smuggle and several others were entered. Brian Horne, a computer specialist at the lab, presided over the process. Horne had entered a number of key words to search.

The result of those searches was a bit overwhelming. There were hundreds or thousands of hits on some words. A lot of incriminating information was obtained from the search. According to lab staff, Northeast Region agents were the first to use the lab to look at computer data seized and deciphered from a warrant.

A useful assumption of the lab investigation was that Horne was not familiar with the case

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New Sea Lamprey Biologist Introduced at Lake Champlain Office

The Northeast Region welcomes Bradley Young to its Lake Champlain Fish and Wildlife Resources Office in Essex Junction, Vt.

“Dr. Young brings experience and credentials that are essential to state-of-the-art management of sea lamprey in Lake Champlain. Given the tight federal budget, we are very lucky to be able to bring him aboard,” said David Tilton, project leader of the Lake Champlain Fish and Wildlife Resources Complex. “Brad’s addition to the Lake Champlain Office will help sea lamprey control efforts and open avenues into newly emerging techniques for controlling sea lamprey populations in Lake Champlain,” Tilton said. Sea lamprey control in Lake Champlain is jointly managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the states of New York and Vermont.

Young comes to the Champlain Basin after finishing

three years of sea lamprey research at Michigan State University. He has spent more than five years working with the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Sea Lamprey Control Office, and the Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans on research to enhance sea lamprey control. These established relationships with Great Lakes agencies will now provide more opportunities for the Lake Champlain office to coordinate efforts with their Great Lakes counterparts while also collaborating on newly developing sea lamprey control strategies.

Young’s sea lamprey research has focused on identifying pheromones (odors emitted by animals) that attract members of the opposite sex to mating nests and attract migrating adults to specific streams or traps. His background in pheromone research will potentially contribute to developing new methods of sea lamprey control, which may help to further decrease the Lake Champlain sea lamprey population. Young will collaborate with the University of Vermont and the Vermont Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit on studies investigating the potential uses of pheromones in Lake Champlain tributaries for sea lamprey control measures.

High Tech, cont’d from p. 1 and therefore would not know where to look. Another key factor was the availability of support to assist in making additional keyword searches and work out what few bugs were encountered. Horne had the retrieval and positioning of the data set up so that almost anyone could recover and place information in locations that are easy to access.

Heinz Refuge Staff Finally Under One Roof After Move

On March 1, after 25 years of temporary office space, the staff of the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum will move into its new administrative headquarters adjoining the Cusano Environmental Education Center. The new administrative wing will be home to 14 refuge staff and includes space for volunteers, the Friends group and Regional Office staff. The wing, about 5,000 square feet and costing a little over \$1 million, incorporates the sustainable design principles of the Cusano Center with the use of recycled materials, energy efficiency, reduced water use and native landscaping.

Investigation Uncovers Multiple Rhino-Tiger Law Violations

On Feb. 18, Service special agents and wildlife inspectors from the Northeast Region and officers from the New York Department of Environmental Conservation assisted agents from the Service’s Special Operations Unit in executing 16 search warrants on Manhattan Chinatown stores. The stores were allegedly selling traditional Chinese medicines purported to contain endangered tiger and

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Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge to Appear On ESPN Outdoors

On March 12, JM Associates collected video footage to produce a vignette for ESPN Outdoors about Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge. Several refuge volunteers and partners took part in the excitement by engaging in refuge activities and projects while being filmed. Members of the Skylands chapter of the Ruffed Grouse Society cut trees to demonstrate habitat enhancement for American woodcock. Vernon Valley Rod and Gun Club members fished along the banks of the Wallkill River as refuge volunteers paddled by in a canoe. Volunteers and New Jersey Audubon Society members posed with telescopes and binoculars as they watched birds. Refuge wildlife cooperated as several thousand ducks and geese were present on the new Liberty Marsh impoundments.



Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge volunteers are filmed in action improving woodcock habitat. USFWS/Kevin S. Holcomb

The short film essay will be broadcast on ESPN Outdoors (ESPN2) at 7:30 a.m. on May 15.

Rhino-Tiger Law, continued from page 2

rhino parts or products in violation of the Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act of 1998.

Agents served an additional search warrant the following day at a Brooklyn warehouse, seizing more medicinal products labeled or advertised to contain tiger and rhino. The Manhattan and Brooklyn searches have yielded many seizures of traditional Chinese medicine products labeled or advertised as containing parts or products of tiger and rhino.

The operation was the culmination of a three-year undercover investigation by the Special Operation Unit.

Maryland Joint Operation Cracks Down on Illegal Waterfowl Hunting

Over the course of two weekends during November and January, eight teams of officers conducted surveillances of suspected law violators in Maryland. The teams consisted of a Service special agent paired with a natural resources police officer. The surveillances resulted in the documentation of 12 subjects who were involved in unlawful taking of over-limits of Canada geese as well as two subjects who unlawfully failed to retrieve waterfowl they shot.

Additionally, information that was developed through surveil-

lance allowed agents and NRP officers to subsequently apprehend seven other hunters for taking over-limits of Canada geese by aid of bait. These hunters will be issued fines through federal violation notices.

The collateral for taking an over-limit of geese is set at \$500 plus \$75 per goose over the limit. The maximum fine imposed can be up to \$5,000 with up to six months incarceration.

Accomplishment Reports Received


The following reports were received in the Accomplishment Reporting System prior to February 29, 2004. Reports received after that date will be included in the next issue of *the MARS report*.

To enter the Accomplishment Reporting System, go to <http://ars.fws.gov>. The current issue of *the MARS report* can be viewed and downloaded from the Northeast Region Web site at <http://northeast.fws.gov/mars.pdf>.

- 1 [Heinz Refuge Staff Finally Under One Roof After Move](#), Bill Buchanan, Heinz NWR
- 2 [High Technology Enters Crime Investigations](#), Donna Taney, Law Enforcement
- 3 [Investigation Uncovers Multiple Rhino-Tiger Law Violations](#), Donna Taney, Law Enforcement
- 4 [New Sea Lamprey Biologist Arrives at Lake Champlain Office](#), Douglas Lawson, Pittsford NFH
- 5 [Oil Spill Pollutes 30 Miles of New Jersey Coastline](#), Donna Taney, Law Enforcement
- 6 [Maryland Joint Operation Cracks Down on Illegal Waterfowl Hunting](#), Donna Taney, Law Enforcement
- 7 [Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge to Appear on ESPN Outdoors](#), Steve Kahl, Wallkill NWR

Other reports for the past month that were not included in the MARS report:

- 7 [Endangered Species Presentation Educates 200 Fourth Graders](#), Donna Taney, Law Enforcement
- 8 [Third Guilty Plea Entered In Interstate Game Fish Trafficking](#), Donna Taney, Law Enforcement
- 9 [Upton, Mass., Man Charged With Shooting Cooper's Hawk](#), Donna Taney, Law Enforcement
- 10 [Undeclared Cane Rat Bushmeat Seized](#), Donna Taney, Law Enforcement
- 11 [Using Ducks as Lures Proves a Losing Idea](#), Donna Taney, Law Enforcement

 *the MARS report* is produced by the External Affairs Office, Northeast Region, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 300 Westgate Center Drive, Hadley, MA 01035-9589.

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